

To Judge Davila,

I am writing this letter to you on behalf of my wife, Lisa McMahon. Over the last 36 years we have been through a lot together – both good and bad.

Lisa has a lot of qualities that help shape who she is. She is my best friend and the absolute love of my life. She is funny, loving, kind, dedicated and hard working. Her only flaw in my eyes is that she puts everyone else before herself. She will do anything she can to protect and provide for her friends and family. She has always given herself to those in need, whether it was the community, church, work or family. She volunteered to transport youth from our church on church outings, she helped run fundraisers for the schools and youth programs our children were involved in and she never said no when asked to help, no matter what the task was. She was the primary caregiver in our family but also the primary breadwinner for years, after disaster wiped out my business, equipment and inventory and drove us into bankruptcy.

She had a very rough and traumatic childhood, and it deeply affected how she viewed the way our family and children's lives would be lived. Her biological father was not only abusive, he left her and her mother one day and took all their belongings with him even Lisa's kitten. He left them with nothing but an empty house to come home to. After that, they moved on a regular basis and when her mother remarried, her new stepfather was abusive, both emotionally and verbally. He kicked her out at a very young age and this was a turning point for Lisa. She began working and volunteering as a candy striper and promised herself that she would never allow her future family to go through what she had.

Shortly after we married my father became very ill and as he began to rapidly deteriorate we decided to take on a mortgage to move into my childhood home with him, rather than put him into a nursing home. In addition to working full time, raising our 5 year old and a 6 month old, she also became focused on caring for my sick father, who was bedridden and unable even to go to the bathroom. His selling the house to us helped to cover only some of the costs of professional in-home care. We were able to keep my father at home with professional in-home care for 18 months before being forced to move him to a nursing home. This level of determination and dedication carried over into her work ethic as well. I remember her disobeying the orders of the Sheriff's Department and using my four wheel drive to get back to work and finish payroll during an evacuation due to flooding, all because she had to get her job done on time for the people who were depending on her.

When her stepfather was diagnosed with a serious heart condition, Lisa's determination to take care of family had her constantly traveling to see them, both when they lived in Hanford and after they moved to Arkansas. It didn't matter that he was still a very hard man to cope with. She was determined to take care of her mother, who was suddenly responsible for tending 45 acres of property and had her own health conditions. She even flew to Arkansas (although she's terrified of flying) in order to drive them cross-country for a medical procedure in San Francisco. When her stepfather passed away, her determination to take care of family resulted in us moving to Arkansas so her mother would not be left alone.

Although it was a hard decision to move, our family was excited at the thought of her leaving her job at MBARI behind. In the years leading up to the move our family had begun to resent her job. What had started as a job entering MBARI payroll data for an outside payroll management firm mushroomed into managing an in-house payroll system, then the retirement management, then fixed asset management. Every vacation we took was interrupted by phone calls from her coworkers and the people who were supposed to be covering for her, we had to re-route our road trips to find internet so she could access work emails and the stress from her job followed us on our whole trip, interfering with our family time. When she gave her 6 month notice and offered to train her replacement, we began a countdown until our family life could be normal again. But when the 6 months came to an end, a replacement had not been found and her boss asked her to stay longer we were disheartened. But that is the kind of person my wife is, the kind of person that will inconvenience herself to prevent other people from being put out. I know it has to be easy for someone who doesn't know Lisa to be convinced she hung on to the job at MBARI in order to steal, but that's not how she thinks. She genuinely wanted to leave a workplace she (and all of us) found impossible. She was just as genuinely sad and conflicted when her boss said she needed her to stay on. I know because I lived that with her. For her the hardest part of reading the probation report wasn't the sentencing options or recommendation but the victim impact statement from MBARI about how actual people were affected.

Even with as much as she worked, she still always found time to raise our kids in a way that I am so proud of. She taught them the meaning of hard work, treating others how they want to be treated and to live a life they can look back on and be proud of. We all still laugh about the family vacation in Las Vegas when our toddler son walked out of the M&M factory with a \$0.49 postcard. When we discovered what had happened, she stopped our motor home on the Strip in the middle of traffic making me get out and go back inside to pay for the card. I bet I can still tell you the license plate number of the bus that almost hit me as I crossed the street. But it was a lifelong lesson of honesty that our whole family remembers.

None of this can justify what Lisa has admitted to doing, but I hope it can give you some insight into the kind of person she truly is. And I can assure you, her actions have not been taken lightly by herself. She

is extremely depressed and cries all the time, her physical health is deteriorating, she suffers from anxiety and panic attacks, can barely get out of bed and at times is too ashamed to face people. She is so unfocused now that she actually got her arm caught in a 20 quart mixer causing serious physical injury. But even through all this she has been able to maintain a strong family relationship, even admitting when things are too hard and she needs our help. She has also made an effort to continue serving her community as a volunteer firefighter.

This is the real Lisa I want you to know. Not just the Lisa, standing before the court, whom under seemingly insurmountable and constant pressure made a mistake that went so completely against her morals, ethic and teachings. The real Lisa is still the rock of our family, and we are patiently waiting to have that Lisa back in our lives.

Thank you,

Mark McMahon